

## Children's Museum Miiamilla

The Children's Museum Miiamilla unveils its latest permanent exhibition, "Children's Worlds", designed to provide a playful and systematic exploration of the multifaceted world of childhood and the journey of growing up within it. At its core, the exhibition promotes free play and learning through play, with every element carefully crafted to support the child's growth, understanding of the world, development of social skills, and acquisition of new knowledge.

Embracing empathy as its main principle, the exhibition encourages children to explore various themes through their own experiences, interactions with exhibits, stories, and fellow visitors. It offers a safe space for experimentation, boundary expansion, friendship building, and conflict resolution, fostering an environment where both children and parents can engage with the museum's playful setting, share emotions, and learn together.

With these starting points in mind, children's important cognitive environments – worlds – was being staged into the new permanent exhibition:

- The inner world – symbolized by the safety of one's room.
- The outer world – urban space, where one

can relate to the surroundings.

- The fantasy world – the environment influenced by the child.
- Additionally, the museum accommodates temporary exhibitions, the first being "Room of Unanimity", seamlessly integrated with the permanent displays to facilitate joint discussions on conflict resolution between children and parents.
- The universe – small planetary with four fantasy seasons.

Each meticulously staged room, from concept to implementation, involved a diverse team of experts ranging from curators, project managers, and interior architects to engineers, illustrators, animators and craftsmen. Moreover, children actively participated in the exhibition's creation – they drew „Emotion characters“ that were turned into physical toys by puppeteer, they drew elements from their rooms and abstract emotions that can be found on the curtains and carpets in the museum, they told stories that you can listen through headset and these are only few examples.

Situated within the historical Kadriorg Park, the museum is housed in a heritage-protected building dating back to 1937, which

presented challenges for architects due to its structural limitations. The goal was to create a bright atmosphere with exhibits seamlessly complementing the building's charm.

Embracing sustainability, the museum incorporates reused materials and items, such as teddy bear touch-wall symbolizing the sense of security, and repurposed model cars for interactive traffic game etc. The exhibition's illustrative style is influenced by the spontaneous artistic expression of children when they draw or paint. The illustrations possess a lively and uninhibited quality, sometimes resembling rough sketches or incomplete works. Colors overflow their edges, with occasional splashes adding to the playful atmosphere. Despite their seemingly unfinished appearance, these illustrations effectively convey stories and evoke a sense of discovery and delight in children, providing them with an opportunity for imaginative exploration and joy.

The curators at Children's Museum Miiamilla approached their work with meticulous attention to detail. Our goal was to translate curator ideas into exhibits that were not only physically safe and durable but also fostered a fun and inviting atmosphere.

## Some examples of how children were involved in the exhibition's creation

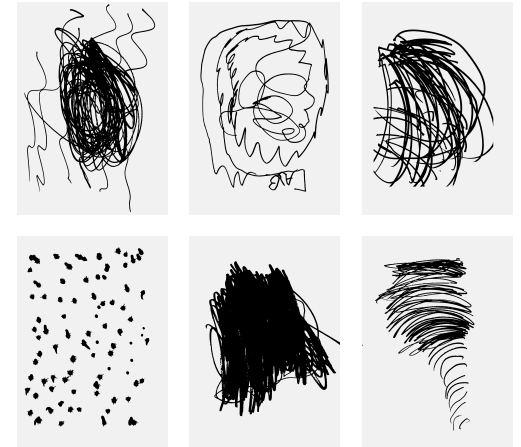
Children drew pictures of their rooms. Different elements from these scanned drawings and paintings were turned into compositions displayed on curtains.



Those drawn elements were also combined into pattern that for example can be found on bed linen in the bed exhibit.



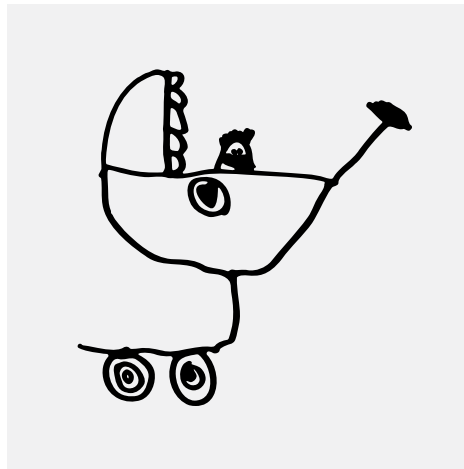
Children also drew abstract emotions that for example can be found on carpets in the lobbies.





## Wayfinding in the museum

We also let children create the common signs for the museum. Signs were drawn by 3-6 year old children.



## Illustrations in the museum

Illustrations in the museum carry an important role.

Colorful and hand drawn watercolor surfaces or digital scribbles are combined with black freehand drawings.

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